

VZCZCXRO9888  
PP RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC  
DE RUEHHK #0275 0430931  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 120931Z FEB 09  
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6880  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI PRIORITY 3937  
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY 1768  
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY 7596  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1390  
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH PRIORITY 0835  
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY PRIORITY 0417  
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY

UNCLAS HONG KONG 000275

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/CM, AIWG, OES/IHA, MED; HHS FOR OGHA -  
STEIGER, HICKEY; CDC ATLANTA FOR CCID AND COGH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMED](#) [EAGR](#) [KFLU](#) [PINR](#) [TBIO](#) [HK](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: MAINLAND POULTRY WASHES UP ON HONG KONG'S SHORES

1.(U) Between 29 January and 9 February, 33 bird carcasses washed up on isolated stretches of Hong Kong,s western coastline, including at least 19 domesticated chickens and six domesticated ducks. Eleven of the birds have tested positive for Avian Influenza to date (nine confirmed H5N1). Local media speculate the birds may have been dumped by smugglers trying to bring them to Hong Kong over the Lunar New Year. Hong Kong Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) officials continue to aggressively search the beaches and villages along the shoreline where the birds were found, but have yet to confirm their origin. Health authorities do not believe there is an immediate increased health risk as long as individuals avoid contact with dead or sick birds and take normal health precautions.

2.(SBU) The Director of AFCD told EconOff on February 10 that most of the birds were severely decomposed and appeared to have drifted for some time before washing up on Lantau Island,s western shore. The majority of the birds were found in three groups discovered close together on February 2nd and 3rd. She confirmed smuggling was a possible source but believed this was unlikely, as drift pattern studies put the birds far from normal smuggling routes. She speculated the birds may have been deliberately dumped in the Pearl River or its tributaries in mainland China by farmers seeking to avoid detection and the subsequent culling of their livestock.  
DONOVAN